



International Association of
Career Consulting Firms

COMPETENCY BASED CREDENTIALS FOR CAREER PROFESSIONALS

A report prepared by the
Education and Accreditation Committee
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Introduction

This report on Competency Based Credentials for Career Professionals is prepared with a two-fold purpose. First, to provide career professionals with a starting point for evaluating the credentials they might pursue to gain competence or provide evidence of existing competence in their sphere of career practice. Second, this report provides those seeking career help with a grid for evaluating the credentials of those offering career assistance.

For the benefit of the career professional, some distinctions need to be made at this point. The first is the distinction between “coaches” and career professionals. As Frederic Hudson describes, “...career professionals are specialists in career knowledge and applications, while coaches are human generalists....career professionals share a common body of literature, while the coaching field does not. The career field is constructed on theory and research, whereas the coaching field is diffuse and less defined.”¹ Today there are many that call themselves *Career Coaches* that have coaching credentials yet lack the specific training and knowledge shared by true career professionals. The credentials covered in this report require *both* specific career field knowledge necessary for competency as career professionals, as well as the coaching skills necessary to facilitate client growth and success.

Another distinction that should be made is that the credentials covered in this report encompass the broader scope of the career management profession. There are, of course, professional resume writing certifications and other niche certifications covering only one specific aspect of career management theory. These more narrow certifications are not considered in the present report.

A final distinction for the career professional is that the credentials explored in this report are granted by professional associations with significant history that have garnered respect in the field of career management. A growing number of career industry practitioners have begun to provide, as an additional income stream in their practice, training and certification to would-be career professionals. Though this training may be excellent, the problems of standardization and objectivity are self-evident.

The second purpose of this report is to provide the growing number of individuals seeking career assistance with a tool to evaluate career service providers.

Awareness of the need to take seriously the management of one’s career is dramatically increasing. Recognition of the fact that the corporation can no longer be looked to for career security is only one factor. Individuals are also realizing that their earning potential is one of their greatest financial assets, deserving of quality management. In many respects, the career is viewed as “the goose that lays the golden eggs”, hence the need to care for the goose.

The following information is provided therefore for the benefit of those career professionals seeking certification as well as individuals seeking competent career assistance.

Career Management Practitioner (CMP)

The Organization Granting the CMP Credential

The Institute of Career Certification International was established in 1994 to promote, encourage and maintain professionalism in the practice of career management. ICC International was originally known as the Outplacement Institute. The primary focus of ICC International is the certification of career management professionals.²

ICC International is sponsored by the Association of Career Professionals International (ACP International) and the Association of Career Firms International (ACF International). Both associations appoint representatives to the Board of ICC International; however, ICC International operates independently of the two associations both financially and administratively. This preserves the integrity of the certification process.³

Requirements for Obtaining the CMP Credential

Candidates for the CMP credential must have 8 years of employment experience of which 4 must be in the Career Management field. Candidates must demonstrate expertise in a minimum of 20 competency areas including 6 core areas. Thirty-five professional development credits are required. Candidates must use 3 separate validation methods to achieve PDCs. A CMP is considered to be a capable consultant, trainer, coach or manager.⁴

Renewal Requirements for the CMP Credential

Annual renewal for the certification is required. Fee schedule is available in the ICC Certification handbook. Every 3 years, certificants must recertify by obtaining and documenting 36 professional development credits.⁵

A PDC documentation form can be downloaded from the ICC International website.⁶

Career Management Fellow (CMF)

The Organization Granting the CMF Credential

ICC International grants the CMF credential (for information on ICC International see the Career Management Fellow credential above).

Requirements for Obtaining the CMF Credential

Requirements for CMF certification are the most rigorous in the field. Candidates must have 12 years of employment experience in which 6 years must be in the career management field. Candidates must demonstrate expertise at a minimum of 30 competency areas, including six core areas. 50 Professional Development Credits (PDC's) are required. At least five different validation methods must be used to achieve the PDC's. Applicants for the CMF credential will be subject to an interview by an individual assigned to the ICC International Board. A fellow is considered a leader in the profession of career management.⁷

Renewal Requirements for the CMF Credential

CMF renewal and re-certification are the same as those for CMP above.

Registered Career Consultant (RCC)

The Organization Granting the RCC Credential

In 1987, the National Association of Career Development Consultants (NACDC) was formed to assure dedication to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism in the career consulting industry. In March of 1992, the Association changed its name to the International Association of Career Consulting Firms (IACCF) to better identify its members and mission.⁸

One of the primary objectives of the IACCF is to develop and furnish educational training and research for career development professionals leading toward the goal of approved registration of consultants as Registered Career Consultants (RCC).⁹

The International Association of Career Consulting Firms is a formal association of member firms that provide corporate outplacement and individual career transition services. The IACCF is committed to providing the highest level of professional career guidance available within the industry.¹⁰

Requirements for Obtaining the RCC Credential

In order to receive the RCC credential, one must provide evidence of competency in seven areas fundamental to the practice of career management. The seven competency areas include: use of assessments, development of long-term career goals, career decision-making, development of career marketing documents including resumes, interviewing and negotiating skills, employing a variety of job search methods, and using the internet in the job search. RCC applicants must provide supporting documentation of competency.¹¹

Renewal Requirements for the RCC Credential

To maintain the RCC status, 24 Professional Development Units (PDU's) are required every two years, demonstrating a Career Consultant's commitment to skill growth and professional development.¹²

Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF)

The Organization Granting the GCDF Credential

In 1997 the Center for Credentialing and Education, Inc. (CCE), The National Career Development Association (NCDA) and the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) joined in a collaborative effort that resulted in the Career Development Facilitator (CDF) project. Since that time, the Global Development Facilitator (GCDF) was developed offering Country Specific standardization and recognition to Career Development Professionals. The GDCF is currently offered in the United States, New Zealand, Japan, and Romania.¹³

CCE is a subsidiary of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC).

Requirements for Obtaining the GCDF Credential

A combination of education and experience is required. Documentation for the highest educational level achieved must accompany an application. The following combination of education and experience is required.

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Graduate Degree | 1,400 hours of experience (estimated 1 year) |
| Bachelor's Degree | 2,800 hours of experience (estimated 2 years) |
| Two Years of College | 4,200 hours of experience (estimated 3 years) |
| High School Diploma/GED | 5,600 hours of experience (estimated 4 years) |

Applicants must complete 120 hours of training in the 12 GCDF competency areas from an approved area provider (a list of approved providers can be viewed at www.cdf-global.org).¹⁴

Renewal Requirements for the GCDF Credential

Recertification is required every 5 years. Seventy-five hours of workshop, in-service training, conference attendance or course work are required during the 5 year recertification period. The continuing education must be in one of the 12 GCDF competency areas. Fifteen hours in other areas may be submitted for CCE review and approval. A detailed statement of continuing education hours is required. A random 10% of certificants will be selected for a complete audit and required to submit written proof of continuing education.¹⁵

Job and Career Transition Coach (JCTC)

The Organization Granting the JCTC Credential

The career planning and adult development network is a non-profit International organization of professionals in the job and career transition field. Founded in 1979, the network publishes bi-monthly *Career Planning and Adult Development Network Newsletter* and quarterly *Career Planning and Adult Development Journal*. The network is also a founding sponsor of the International Career Development Conference that draws over 1000 career professionals to its meeting each November. The Board of Directors includes representatives from Australia, Europe and North America.¹⁶

Richard L. Knowdell is the executive director of CPAD. He has 29 years of experience and is a leading figure in the Career Management Field. He is the author of *Building a Career Development Program: Nine Steps for Effective Implementation* (1996) and Co-author of *From Downsizing to Recovery: Strategic Transition Options for Organizations and Individuals* (1994). Knowdell teaches courses in career assessment techniques at the University of California, San Diego and employee career development techniques to Human Resource professionals at San Jose State University.

Requirements for Obtaining the JCTC Credential

The JCTC Credential requires the successful completion of an intensive, hands-on workshop. Candidates must demonstrate their knowledge and skill in transition coaching and participate fully in the training session.¹⁷

Candidates who satisfactorily complete the training program will be granted certification by the Career Planning and Adult Development Network and receive a certificate of competence. The certification is based on demonstrated mastery of the coaching skills and job search training knowledge and techniques during the intensive training program.¹⁸

Renewal Requirements for the JCTC Credential

The JCTC credential is a one-time certification with no renewal requirements.

Conclusion

Career management certification raises the standard of professionalism, and recognizes those who have distinguished themselves through significant achievement in the field of career management. The variety of certification options in this report provide something for everyone, whatever their professional level.

The Education and Accreditation Committee of the IACCF has prepared this report to facilitate the certification process for career professionals.

Notes

¹ Frederic M. Hudson, "Introduction: Special Issue on Coaching and Mentoring," *Career Planning and Adult development Journal*, Volume 17 Number1 (2001): 5.

² ICC International, *Certification Information Handbook*, Institute of Career Certification International, 2003, p.3.

³ Ibid.

⁴ ICC International, <http://www.careercertification.org/categories.html> (accessed August 28, 2005).

⁵ ICC International, *Handbook*, p.10.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ ICC International, <http://www.careercertification.org/categories.html>

⁸ International Association of Career Consulting Firms, <http://www.iaccf.com/about.htm> (accessed September 3, 2005).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ International Association of Career Consulting Firms, *Registered Career Consultant Application and Renewal Guidelines*, International Association of Career Consulting Firms, p. 1.

¹² Ibid, p.2.

¹³ Center for Credentialing and Education, <http://www.cdf-global.org/History%20of%20the%20GCDF.htm> (accessed September 7, 2005).

¹⁴ CCE, <http://www.cdf-global.org/info/usrequirements.htm> (accessed September 7, 2005).

¹⁵ CCE, <http://www.cdf-global.org/gcds/recert.htm> (accessed September 7, 2005).

¹⁶ Career Planning and Adult Development Network, http://www.careernetwork.org/career_workshops_index.html (accessed September 4, 2005).

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.